Faculty of Communication & Media Studies

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Title : Interpreting Psychological Warfare: Understanding Religious Extremism from a Discourse Analysis Approach
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This thesis investigates the meaning of “psychology” in psychological warfare by explaining the factors that permit the existence of religious extremist behavior. Such attention are been given because the problem is relatively understudied in Malaysia and that has resulted in the inability to develop an ideal psychological warfare model to deal with the problem. Since 2001, Malaysia has been labeled as a breeding ground for religious extremist leaders. The recurring number of religious extremist cases magnifies our limited understanding on the psychological context of the problem and if left unattended, can prolong the situation. To propose a theoretical solution to the problem, three research objectives were formulated and they are: (1) how existential psychology can be used to explain religious extremism, (2) how behavioral psychology can be used to explain religious extremism and (3) how psychoanalytical psychology can be used to explain religious extremism. Conclusively, discourse analysis on 37 psychological constructs extracted from three psychological paradigms of Frankl, Pavlov & Skinner, and Freud have enabled this study to theorize a multi-factor stand to look at the problem, hence confirming the root cause of it. Some “Enabling Factors” emerged to authenticate the conceptual model in terms of framing the roots and types of religious extremist behavior. These “Enabling Factors” are divided into three categories consist of Single-Psychological Factor, Double-Psychological Factor, and Triple-Psychological Factor. The results show, religious extremist behavior falls in the Triple-Psychological Factor category. This means, in order for religious extremist behavior to emerge, there must be simultaneous psychological problem of (1) severe inability to develop meaning to life, (2) prolonged environmental stimulation toward aggressiveness and violent, and (3) inability to adopt mature defense mechanisms due to the development of fixation, blind obsession in ritual practice and condoning a destructive worldview towards life. In summary, overcoming these enabling factors is a highly recommended psychological warfare skill in an attempt to understand religious extremism and to halt the problem before it begins. This is a small but significant breakthrough in psychological warfare research as this conceptual model offers a new approach to the prevention of extremist behavior by providing in-depth psychological knowledge on the root causes of the problem and subsequently weaponized psychological warfare initiative for peace purposes.

Faculty of Business Management

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Young employees in organizations are becoming more demanding concerning justice and career development. The working culture of young employees is different compared to previous generations. Being different, this cohort brings in the “job hop” phenomena into the workforce and the attitude has observed reduction in level of engagement towards organizations. Engaged employees are important in organizations to enable them to acquire more knowledge and become multi skilled human capital through in-depth experience, with the assistance and support from mentor, coach and supervisor from the organizations. Scholars globally have been studied job satisfaction, job commitment, organizational citizenship behavior and the like among employees. However, there is still a dearth in studies to examine the relationship between employee engagement with organizational justice and organizational learning. This study examined the relationship between employee engagement with organizational justice and organizational learning, and the role of organizational image as mediator. The dependent variable was employee engagement, independent variables were organizational justice and organizational learning and organizational image was the mediating variable. For organizational justice, 3 dimensions were used in this study (1) distributive justice (2) procedural justice (3) interactional justice. Three dimensions were also used for organizational learning, (1) training (2) mentoring and (3) coaching. The underpinning theory used to support this study is the social exchange theory and socialization theory. The social exchange theory stated that organizations are forums for transactions where activities voluntarily exchange from individuals towards the organizations, while socialization theory stated that a protégé who has a good relationship with his or her mentor tend to produce better work quality compare to protégé who does not mentor. Results are in the form of positive outcome or otherwise and it depends on the perception of fairness felt by employees towards the organizations and good mentoring and training system that organization provide to employees. Sample used in this study are 413 young bankers from five commercial banks in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Primary data were collected using survey questionnaire that was personally distributed to the participants at the participating banks. Data obtained were analyzed using SPSS. The type of study is a correlation study and the aim was to examine the variables that are associated with the problem instead of trying to establish the definitive cause and effect relationship. In examining the variables, a few types of analysis were conducted, (1) descriptive analysis (2) factor analysis (3) reliability test (4) response bias analysis (5) one-way ANOVA (6) correlation analysis and (7) multiple regression analysis. The results found indicated that employee engagement, the dependent variable, was conceptualized into two dimensions, i.e., engagement feelings and engagement loyalty. It also shows that (1) distributive justice, interactional justice, mentoring and training predict engagement feelings (2) only distributive justice predicts engagement loyalty; (3) organizational image partially mediates the relationship between distributive justice, interactional justice, mentoring and training with engagement feelings, and (3) organizational image partially mediates the relationship between distributive justice with engagement loyalty. The findings are useful in assisting Human Resource management team and Human Resource consulting firms in Malaysia to provide useful suggestions and recommendations in promoting the increase in level of engagement among young employees and ultimately contribute towards long term organizational success.